

# Priests' communication practice and perception of code mixing in sunday sermons

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## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history

Received 2021-10-21

Revised 2021-10-26

Accepted 2021-11-10

### Keywords

Code-mixing

Sunday Sermon

Priest

Practice

Perception

## ABSTRACT

A number of studies on code-mixing have been extensively researched in educational communication; but few studies have explored the practice of code-switching in preaching, which is the domain of religious communication. The study aims to describe the practice of code-mixing in delivering sermons by pastors who use traditional language (Simalungun) as a medium of delivery. The study used a descriptive qualitative research approach with a survey research design using the google form platform as a research instrument, involving sixty priests as the study participants, using the Simalungun language as a medium for delivering sermons. The results of this study reveal that the motivation to use code-mixing is very important to clarify and facilitate the delivery and understanding of the content of the sermon. The results of this study also reveal the reasons, the dominant preaching genre using code-mixing, the language used in code-mixing, the problems faced in practicing code-mixing, as well as the congregation's perception of the practice of code-mixing carried out by pastors. The results of this study provide a complete description of the practice and perception of code-mixing in sermons using the Simalungun language. Further researches on the content of preaching in Sunday sermons using different methods of analysis are suggested by the study.

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## 1. Introduction

World languages have been brought into a global culture that is dominated largely by western cultural standards by the mainstream culture [1]. In view of things, the standard of civilization is measured from the western viewpoints. All is kept at the heart of our culture, commonly referred to as local wisdom in anthropology. Local wisdom is also called local knowledge, or local intelligence, which is a foundation for cultural identity (indigenous knowledge or local knowledge) [2].

The problem facing regional languages today is their position and function no longer in accordance with the position and function given to it [3]. Regional language is no longer used as a proud identity, so its function is no longer used as the main language of communication in family life and supporting community. Therefore, the maintenance of regional languages is necessary done. This problem is related to the heritage of the community's cultural values. If there is not a shred of culture that can be inherited by society, especially those who the language is extinct and almost extinct then the people will lose their roots the culture [4].

Regional languages in Indonesia have to be preserved, nurtured and developed as a cultural heritage [5]. Knowledge of regional languages must therefore be improved to promote, develop and maintain them. In the province of North Sumatra, Simalungun Language is one of the regional languages that speakers use both as the language of daily communication and as the Indonesian language [6]. The language plays a crucial role, just as in other local languages of Indonesia. It is the language of daily life and the language of traditional ceremonies that is used as an identity-marker for the society, especially in bilingual and multilingual contexts [7].

The use of regional languages today including Simalungun language is allegedly experiencing an increased decline both in quality and quantity (number of speakers). However, a number of studies oppose this tendency by emphasizing the use of regional languages in certain communication events, including the delivery of religious sermons [8]. The anxiety about the existence of the Javanese language, apart from having a negative impact, it also has a positive impact. The positive impact leads to action further researches and attention from policy makers, linguists and observers of Simalungun to preserve it from the threat of extinction. This effort is commonly called as language conservation [9], which among other things is carried out through the religious realm, namely: through the Sunday sermon.

Given the importance of maintaining local languages in this globalization condition [10], the Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (GKPS) has long taken a policy to use it as the language of instruction in worship. In addition to complementing the understanding of the Bible, this policy is also very effective in preserving the use of the language [11]. However, in the practice of using this language in preaching, priests and church administrators still often mix other languages in the form of cod-mixing and code switching [11].

Efforts to make Simalungun the language of instruction at church services have been carried out since Christianity entered the land of Simalungun in 1903 [12]. This was performed to accommodate the limited communication skills of local residents. Along with the development of today's era, church administrators have determined the use of Indonesian and even English in worship events. This policy was also taken to accommodate the communication needs of congregation members, especially those who live in urban areas. However, Simalungun remains a top priority as the language of instruction in worship activities at this church. Other languages, such as Indonesian and English are also used, especially in big cities, which aims to accommodate the demands of the younger generation in understanding the meaning of worship.

In the context of using Simalungun worship, priests that deliver sermons often mix other languages into Simalungun [13]. This activity is commonly performed intentionally or spontaneously in delivering sermons in worship. From the existing literature, there is no research that discusses the use of this code-mixing strategy in delivering sermons in the language. Meanwhile, this condition is assumed to have been going on for a long time, and will continue to be carried out in the delivery of the Sunday sermon.

A number of previous studies have discussed the use of code mixing in delivering sermons in worship in various religions in Indonesia. [14] [15]. [16]. For instance, people in Central Java and Yogyakarta still use Javanese in their sermons every Friday to maintain the existence of the language as a local language and as a tool to convey religious messages in Islam. The use of local languages is influenced by preachers and listeners who want the language to be used as a tool to deliver Islamic religious messages, although in practice the use of Indonesian as code-mixing is unavoidable [5]. The use of this local language helps to understand the content of the sermon delivered so that it is easy to understand by the congregation. Linguistic elements used as a means of code-mixing in Friday Prayer sermon are in the forms of words, phrases, clauses and sentences.

In the Christian church, a number of researchers have also explored the effectiveness of using code-mixing in church sermons [17] [18] [19] [20]. Almost all of the studies above discussed the effectiveness of using code-mixing in delivering the text of the Sunday sermon in the church. This study offers a new dimension, namely the amalgamation of the practice of using code-mixing and the perception of the priest as the user of the code-mixing in the context of using the language as one of the ethnic languages in Indonesia as the language of instruction.

This research is hoped to contribute to the barriers to communication aspects that initiate the emergence of code-mixing, the variety of text genres in code mixing, the language used in code mixing, and the congregation's response to the practice of code-mixing. From the existing literature, the author has not found a similar research topic in the application of code-mixing in Simalungun. Meanwhile, the focus of this research is to reveal the essence of using code-mixing in the language which can be used as literature for future research. The results of this study are also expected to enrich the code-mixing literature, especially in its application in the local language which is used as a tool to convey sermon messages in the church. Based on the frequent phenomenon of code-mixing, the research paper attempts to describe the practice of using code-mixing in delivering sermons in Simalungun and explores the perceptions of priests on the use of code-mixing in delivering religious communication messages.

## **2. Theoretical Framework**

### **2.1. Religious Communication Delivery**

The delivery of sermons in religious activities must continue to prioritize communication theory related to the principles and methods of delivering information. Communication theory discusses the phenomenon of communication, the relationship between a number of communication phenomena including the analysis of events in communication and how the communication process occurs [21].

As a dynamic study, the communication process in a society continues to change so that communication experts continue to develop communication strategies that are tailored to the needs of the community [22]. Looking at modern communication strategy theory, the latest theory posits that communication is a process that is interactive by nature and participatory at all levels. This process puts an emphasis on meaning presentations, negotiations, and constructions.

The delivery of sermons as a religious communication activity cannot be separated from this communication phenomenon. Sermons can be defined as communication acts informed by religious believers' understanding of their faith, namely the activity of conveying and discussing faith and truth to others [23]. Two main communication barriers obtained from religious events are about language and individuals' lack of knowledge or information about belief systems. These two barriers can impact how people communicate with one another. This is a communication problem that often arises in delivering sermons.

Related to these two things, a number of theologians argue that there are four principles of effective communication in Christianity. Effective Christian communication must be able to control what the speaker says, be careful in controlling emotions and feelings towards the words spoken, control the tone of voice and observe and analyze every word that will be conveyed [24].

Using traditional language in delivering sermons is as a part of culture has been linked to numerous communication traits and behaviors. In particular, religion has been linked with language use and preferences [25]. Cultures are created through communication, and it is also through communication between individuals that cultures change over time. Each person involved in a communication encounter brings the sum of his or her own experiences from other (past or present) culture memberships. Research that links communication, language, culture and religion is an interesting topic to study.

### **2.2. Simalungun Language and Culture**

As a big country, Indonesia has various regional languages. The languages are used as means of communication in various formal and informal activities within their tribes, including in worship activities. Article 36 of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Chapter XV states that the regional language is a living part of Indonesian culture and is one of the elements of Indonesian national culture that is protected by the state. In this regard, the law also states that regional languages are those whose existence is recognized by a country. This statement is contained in Article 32 paragraph 2 of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia which emphasizes that the State respects and preserves regional languages as national cultural treasures which function as a source of Indonesian Language and one of the means to enrich the Indonesian language. Therefore, Simalungun is still used by its tribe as the main communication means in various communication events, especially those related to customs and culture. This phenomenon

can be observed from its use in a number of traditional ceremonies carried out in the context of Simalungun culture.

### 2.3. Sermon in Simalungun Language

A preacher's speech is a speech made by a clergy. Sermons deal with a theological or moral subject, usually about a type of belief, law or behavior both of the past and of the present. The sermon often includes exposure, exhortation and practical use. Preaching is called the act of providing a sermon. The term sermon can often be misleadingly used in secular use for a lecture on morality.

Another effort to preserve local languages is to use local languages as a means of communication. As one of the tribal-based churches in North Sumatra, Indonesia, the Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (GKPS) has established Simalungun as the main language in worship services such as delivering sermons. This policy was taken for the first time to convey and spread the gospel to the community, who at that time did not understand other languages besides their own regional language. Today, this policy continues to be maintained so that the younger generation of this ethnic understand and become users of the language, which is allegedly decreasing in terms of quantity and quality.

But there are other challenges, particularly for members of the congregation who live in big cities. Most of the church community, particularly the younger generation, do not fully comprehend the language. In big cities, its community tend to speak Indonesian. Eventually, the adoration session was separated into two parts; the worship in Simalungun and Indonesian. Church administrators and priests must also combine other languages into the Sermon in order to appease the recommendations of the congregation and the knowledge of both the content and significance of the Sermon particularly in the adoration using Simalungun. The focus of this research is this combining. This combination is known as "code mixing" in linguistic and cultural terms.

### 2.4. Code-Mixing and Code-Switching

Code mixing and switching corresponds to the combination in speech of two or more languages. In syntax, morphology and other working language studies, the phrases "mix code" and "code-switching" are used interchangeable terms by voice-speakers [26]. Other linguists assume more specific definitions of code-mixing, but these specific definitions may be different in different sub-fields of linguistics, education theory, communications etc. Code-mixing is equivalent to pidgin utilization and creation; however, while a Pidgin is generated in a cross setting with speaker systems sharing and over one language across groups that don't speak the same language.

When mixing and switching a code, speakers are changing their language to accommodate the person with whom they communicate. They flip the code when having a discussion about a certain subject or changing the context or communicating the individual's identity who changes the code [27]. A speaker starts to change the code to show the audience technicality or behavior and, if certain words are missing in a speech, they are given the words in a different language.

A preacher usually uses code-mixing and code-switching in a language he knows well (quote). He can also use more than one language in code-mixing. There has been no specific research so far on the choice of language used in code mixing and code-switching in delivering sermon texts in this Simalungun. In the context of a sermon in Simalungun, a priest usually uses Indonesian and English in code-mixing and code-switching; as can be seen in the following excerpt:

*"Sonari on, untuk mendapatkan suara, haganupan jolma ikawani. Bahkan kadang-kadang rela do halak mangkorjahon na jahat, demi mendapatkan popularitas. Songon idah hita bani berita, atene. Sonari on bahat do halak naterjebak, ingin jadi terkenal, tapi ihorjahon hajahaton; mengerahkan massa, melakukan bom,. Lang persoalan bani, orang lain itu sakit hati, orang lain*

*itu korban. Yang penting dia terkenal. Nah, tapi nini bani ambilanta on, na so ra mangirikkon riah ni parjahat, orang fasik, evil man."*

In the instance above, the speaker moves from the Simalungun to Indonesian, English and Toba languages in the same religious community. The narrator uses the languages to capture the listener's interest or to speak to the audience, and then moves to Simalungun to convey the real thing. The switching position is called a switch point among two languages and it is very important. For such a purpose, the switch point carries information behind the switch. Switch points represent different categories of code switching. However, in some sentences, phrases and words, he uses code-mixing and code-switching. From the analysis conducted on the snippet of the sermon text above, the speaker uses code-mixing and code switching to emphasize a proposition [28].

The mixing and switching of code are concepts in which a second language is mixed into a first and foreign languages mixed into a native language [29]. The occurrences of the two thus do not inevitably include languages from abroad. Local languages are often used as code mixing and national language code switching. The two cannot be differentiated, but the length of utterances only differs. In expressions, code-switching is shorter. Code-mixing and code-changing are unavoidable as one of the manifestations of language [30]. Code switching and code mixing have similarity to using two or more language versions in a voice community or two language variants.

Mixing and changing the code in bilingual and multilingual environments are common as a language phenomenon [16]. They have a concept of linguistic interaction that does not represent the grammatical structures of both languages. Phrases are also borrowed from one word without adjusting topics and adapted in other languages. Code mixing and code switching could rely on the communicative context, the cognitive task requirements and the contact person for bilingualism. Code mixing can also serve to resolve differences in linguistic knowledge. Some forms of persons' code mixing can demonstrate a risk of language impairment.

People change their language to accommodate the person with whom they communicate [31]. When you have to communicate about a specific topic, change the context or interact the identity of the individual who switches code. People who switch code demonstrate formality or their perception towards the audience and if some utterances are absent, they get those phrases from a different language.

### 3. Method

This study uses a qualitative research approach with an enquiry design to describe priests' practice of code switching. The data for this study were obtained from the questionnaires in Google form, which were distributed to priests. The questionnaires contained series of questions (open and closed) to discover the respondents' code-mixing practice and their perspective of language mixing. The research participants were selected by applying convenient sampling technique. Based on the method of sampling, sixty priests were firstly provided information on the nature as well as purpose of the study and consented. The following are the demographic data of the 60 participants. Based on age, participants were categorized into three groups; below 30 years consisting of 3 respondents (5%), 31 to 50 years consisting of 45 respondents (75%), and above 50 years consisting of 12 respondents (20%). Based on the duration of work, respondents are further divided into 3 groups, namely respondents with years of service under 10 years consisting of 19 respondents (32%), 11 to 20 years consisting of 17 respondents (28%), and above 30 years consisting of 24 respondents (40%). Further, based on academic background, 29 respondents have bachelor degree in theology (48%), 26 respondents got master degree in theology (43%), and 5 respondents got Doctoral degree in theology (6%).

The research questionnaires that have been designated as research instruments were firstly validated by three experts from sociolinguistics, theology and education science. Themes of questions in the research questionnaire include frequency of code-mixing occurrence, reasons for using code mixing, the text genres of using code mixing, the language which are used in code mixing, the problems of using code mixing, the congregations' responses on the priests' practices of code mixing in their Sunday service speech. There are two types of questions asked in the instrument, namely "open ended questions" for questions related to the reasons for using code



mixing, the language used in code mixing, and obstacles in the use of code mixing. While the type of question "close ended question" is used to explore information related to the percentage of code-mixing use, the genre of sermon texts that use code mixing, and the pastors' perception of the congregation's satisfaction in their code-mixing performance.

The questionnaires were distributed in September 2021 to seventy-five priests of Simalungun Protestant Christian Church (GKPS); however, only sixty priests who returned the google form back. Some said that the explanations were technical difficulties in the communication web, some said they had not enough time to answer the questions. The questionnaire data were then analyzed by qualitative data analysis, data collection, categorization, data reduction, data analysis and conclusions and verification.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1. Results

#### 1) The Practice of Code-Mixing

Table 1 below presents that the distribution of data on the frequency of using code mixing in sermons by means of Simalungun is as follows: "sometimes" is in the first place (33.3%), "rarely and always" is in second place with each (21.67%), "often" is in third place (18.33%) and "never" is in last place (5%). This phenomenon shows that most pastors in Simalungun-speaking churches use code mixing. In the provision of sermon texts in SL only 3 priests, or (5%) had never used code-mixing.

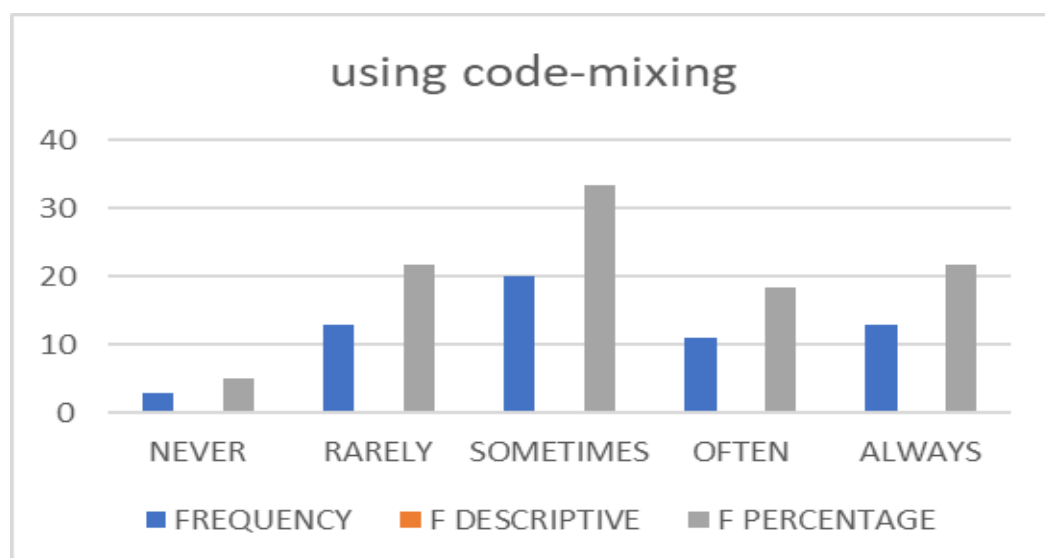
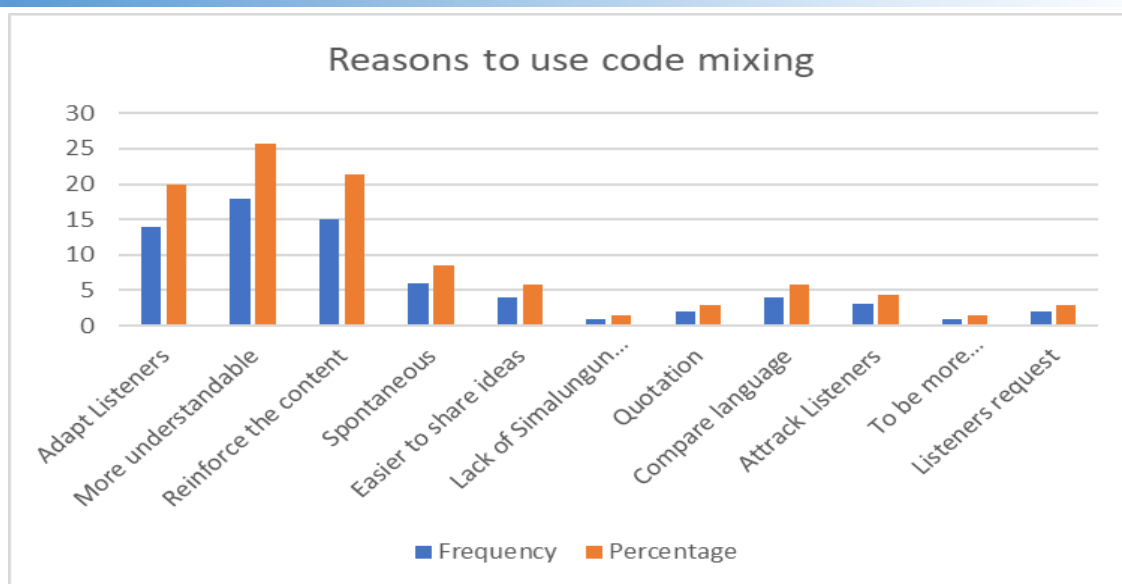


Fig. 1. The Frequency of using Code-mixing

When probed the priests why they used code mixing in their preaching, their factors were clarified in Table 2 above. The study exposed 11 types of primary motivations for the use of code mixing using open ended question types. The three main reasons were those for making the message of the sermon that they conveyed easier to understand, ranking first in the 18 interviewees (25.71%), which led to a highlighting of the message/meaning of the preaching specified by 15 interviewees (21.43%) and familiarizing the listening situation and status.



**Fig. 2.** The reasons for Performing Code-Mixing

Apart from the above primary motivations, the priests have specified several further reasons for using code mixing. Some are impulsive (8.57%), language compared and easy to convey thoughts (5.71%); attraction efforts (4.29%); demands for listeners (2.86%), nonappearance of the Simalungun language and for dependable communication; (1.43 %).

In general there are several types of text genres in sermons where priests need to use code mixing. From the data obtained, the genre includes definition, description, exposition, narration, argumentation. The following table illustrates the description of the frequency of the types of texts which mix code:

**Table 1.** Preaching Genres using Code Mixing

Table	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Definition</b>	17	21.79
<b>Description</b>	9	11.54
<b>Exposition</b>	15	19.23
<b>Narration</b>	15	19.23
<b>Argumentation</b>	13	16.67
<b>Mixture</b>	9	11.54
	78	100.00

The priests detailed the choice of text genres from various genres of sermon texts, where code mixes were used. This choice is typically based on their practice with code mixing. The above figure shows that the frequency of text genres using the code mixture is "definition" (21.79%), followed by "exposition and narration" (19.23%), "argumentation" (13%), and each is designated and mixed (9 percent). Remarkably enough, 9 replies specify that they don't know precisely in what text they use code mixing.

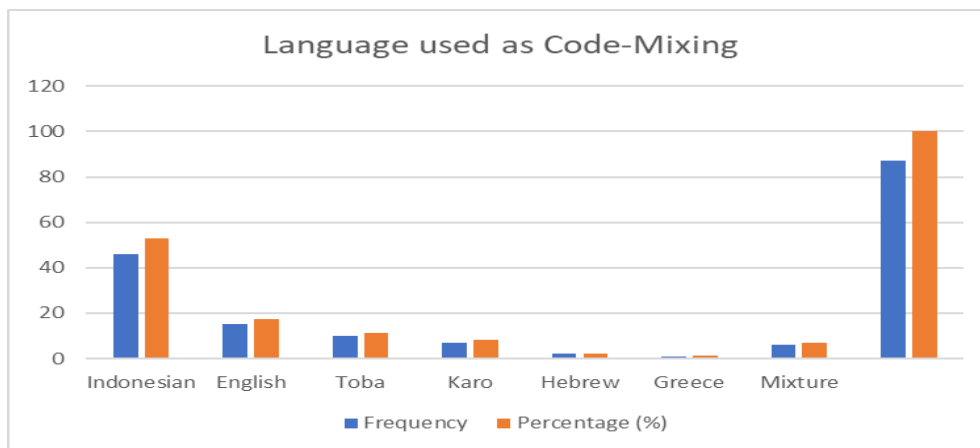
## 2) Language used as code-mixing

In the implementation of code mixing, priests have several dominant languages. These languages are Indonesian, English, Toba, Karo, Hebrew, Greek and blending, as shown in the following table.

**Table 2.** Languages used in code-mixing

<i>Language used in Code-Mixing</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
<i>Indonesian</i>	46	52.87
<i>English</i>	15	17.24
<i>Toba</i>	10	11.49
<i>Karo</i>	7	8.05
<i>Hebrew</i>	2	2.30
<i>Greece</i>	1	1.15
<i>Mixture</i>	6	6.90
	87	100.00

Table 2 above shows that the language used by the pastor in delivering sermons in Simalungun is dominated by Indonesian (52.87%), English (17.24%), Toba (11.49%), Karo (8.05%), Hebrew (2.30%) and Greek (1.15%). From the above information, the priests' language of choice is the first language that in Indonesia is the official language, while the Toba and the Karo Regional languages directly adjacent to the Simalungun Region occupy the second and third places.

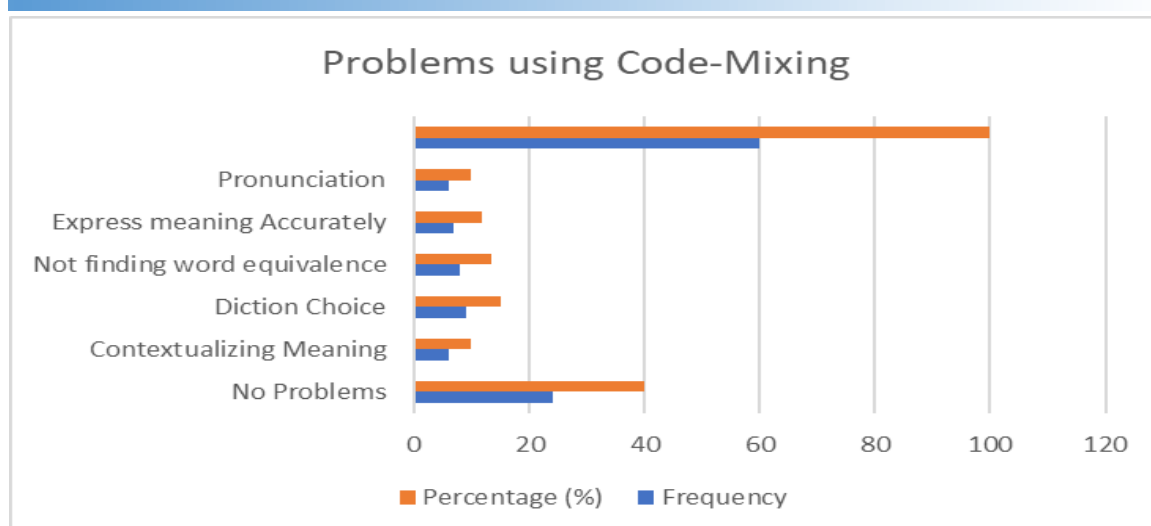
**Fig. 3.** Languages used as code-mixing

### 3) Perception of Code-Mixing

#### a) The problems encountered in Applying Code-Mixing

Besides the description of the use of code-mixing above, a number of pastors stated that they had no problems at all in using code-mixing. However, a number of pastors encountered several types of problems in implementing code-mixing, as described in the figure below:





**Fig. 4.**Problems in Using Code-Mixing

From the information recorded, there were 40 percent of respondents of priests who do not have problems with code mixing from the information recorded. However, 60% of priests experience challenges with the implementation of code mixing. Word choice selection (15%), lack of adequate meaning equivalence (13.3%), precise meaning expressed during code mixing (11.67%), context-specific meaning (10 percent) and spellings are all obstacles (10 percent).

*b) Congregation's perception of Priests' practices of code-mixing*

In addition to conducting a survey of the practice of code-mixing by priests, the study also investigated how priests measured their congregation's level of satisfaction of the practice of code-mixing in sermons. Eighty-eight percent of the 60 pastoralists surveyed said that their congregations were satisfied with the practice of code-mixing in sermons. Ten percent of priests did not answer, while six percent had doubts or never carried out an enquiry on their congregation.

## 4.2. Discussion

This study presents how priests use code mixing in their preaching and interpret it. The local language used throughout the study is Simalungun language in GKPS, of the Lutheran Churches in North Sumatra, Indonesia. This research assessed the practice of code mixing and the interpretation of the use of code mixing in particular.

In this study, code mixing includes the use of code-mixing frequency, reasons for the use of code mixing, the kind of texts that use code mixing and the language used in code mixing. While the issue of assessing the perception of code-mixing concerns the priests' problems in code-mixing and the community's response to the code-mixing practice.

Firstly, in terms of the frequency of the code mixing, the majority answer from the interviewees was "sometimes" category. This phenomenon shows that Simalungun priests do not always use code-mixing for delivering sermon. This finding also confirmed that only if those who have problems with delivering Simalungun messages do, they practice code mixing. Above all, code-mixing takes place spontaneously, without pre-planning. This fact is in a line with other research findings [32]. The absence of code-switching in the delivery of sermons also indicates a very good mastery of Simalungun competence by the pastors, who continue to strive to use Simalungun authentically without mixing their sermons with other languages [33]. Research related to the frequency of using code mixing in the Sunday service was also conducted by [14] who found that English was also sometimes used as code-mixing in delivering sermons using Chinese as the language of instruction. There are similarities in findings with this study, but the source that distinguishes it is the data source where this study uses YouTube videos as secondary data.

Secondly, regarding the reasons for using code-mixing in delivering sermons, the priests revealed eleven reasons, although the distribution of the reasons was not evenly distributed. The

three reasons for using code-mixing that dominate respondents' answers are to emphasize that the message conveyed in the sermon is easier to understand. The second reason concerns emphasizing the meaning and message of the content of the sermon which is only appropriate if it is expressed using the main language (Simalungun). The third reason most expressed by respondents was to adjust the situation and condition of the congregation, where the ability of the congregation to understand Simalungun as the main language was still low. The reason for using code-mixing in delivering this sermon is in accordance with the findings.

Third, when the respondents were asked questions related to the genre of the sermon text in which they used code-mixing. They revealed six categories of the genre of the sermon text. The five text genres, which are almost evenly used are definition, description, exposition, narration and argumentation. Of the five text genres, the text that mostly uses code-mixing genre definition, exposition and narration. This phenomenon is understandable because the definition of one concept in the bible verse that uses Simalungun, has not been able to accommodate the meaning that the preacher wants to convey [17]. The interesting thing about this finding is when the priests use code-mixing in all categories of preaching genres [36]. Information obtained from respondents, the priests who use code mixing in all genres of sermon texts do not master the language well, or live in an area where Simalungun does not function as the first language in that area.

Fourthly, the language used as code-mixing in delivering sermons in Simalungun is dominated by Indonesian, English, Toba and Karo languages. The choice of language is of course based on careful consideration by the pastors regarding the content of the sermon, message, customs and message delivered [32]. The choice of the majority of pastors is Indonesian because ideas, thoughts and feelings are more easily conveyed through this official language. English is the second most chosen language as a language in code mixing. There is a tendency that occurs in the Simalungun community that priests who master English are considered more modern and have more mastery of the preaching material delivered. An interesting phenomenon from the findings of this study is the use of other regional languages in the use of code-mixing [37], namely Toba language and Karo language. These two language-using communities have cultural links with the Simalungun community where the same cultural elements are also found in these two Batak sub-ethnics. The use of these two languages is also more dominant in the Simalungun church which is directly adjacent to the two tribal areas. The languages with relatively less frequency in this code mixing are Hebrew and Greek [38]. The use of these two languages which are very closely related to the language of the Bible is intended to emphasize terms or meanings whose concepts are not found in the BS. Users of this language in code mixing are priests who are experts in biblical history (Poplack & Walker, 2003).

Fifthly, the priests who use Simalungun as a medium of instruction generally have no problem with using code-mixing because they consider code-mixing as an alternative. Even if there are some pastors who raise problems about the practice of using code-mixing, the order of frequency of the problems includes choosing the right diction, not having equivalent words in Simalungun, expressing meaning accurately, contextualizing meaning and pronunciation [18]. Although diction is often a problem in code-mixing, pastors can immediately find the equivalent meaning of other languages, because they have to do so considering the limited time in delivering sermons.

Sixthly, related to the congregation's perception of the practice of code-mixing in delivering sermons in Simalungun, the pastors concluded that the majority of the congregation were satisfied because the content of the message they hoped could be delivered well through this code-mixing. Although some congregations feel that the practice of code-switching can degrade the intensity of using Simalungun and reduce the authenticity of this language, the practice of using code-mixing cannot be avoided, but may be minimized. Therefore, both pastors and congregations still want to use this code-mixing to make it easier to convey the contents of the sermon, as well as to make it easier for the congregation to understand the content of the sermon.

When other studies choose the topics of reason, motivation, function, and code switching ethnography in delivering sermon texts using the national language as the unit of analysis (Snell,

2016; Tamelan et al., 2020; Yuliana et al., 2015), This research has its own uniqueness by choosing the frequency, genre, motivation, and language variation as the analysis of the study using Simalungun, which is the regional language used as a medium of communication in delivering sermons at the Simalungun Protestant Christian Church. The second uniqueness is that research data were obtained directly from participants who practice code-mixing in their communication activities [42], so that the resulting data are more reliable and dependable. In addition, this study offers a new dimension in the topic of code-switching research by selecting the object of research on the religious communication process, namely sermons in churches using Simalungun, which is a tradition in North Sumatra, Indonesia.

## 5. Conclusion

The current study aims at describing the practice of code-mixing by priests using Simalungun as the medium of communication as well as their perception on their practice of code-mixing. Most priests practice code-mixing in delivery Sunday sermon speeches with various languages and with various reasons. One important fact from the analysis revealed that the use of code mixing in their sermons was solely intended to clarify the meaning and messages they conveyed so that the listeners of the sermons more easily understood the messages they conveyed. Delivery of sermons in bilingual speech can specify their relationship to other people in the traditional Simalungun system of social categorization and express their identity.

The result shows how a code switch between priests and Simalungun is used to socialize their identity. This research also shows that the ethnic church in Simalungun is really a powerful institution for the transmission and preservation of ethnic identities as well as religious lessons. In addition, code-changing played a key role in the Simalungun language, while the use of Simalungun as the channel of sermon delivery is stepped up. This survey helps to analyze the practice of Sunday sermon code-mixing in Simalungun.

However, in future studies, the study has several limitations. One limitation of the study is the source of data deduced only from priests, excluding data from the assembly. Another is that coding mixing was only discovered from priestly data and not from liturgy transcriptions of coding observations. One of the advantages of this study is that the data generated comes from the priest who is the perpetrator of the code-mixing practice himself. The results of that study suggest that the Sunday sermon in Simalungun can be used not only to teach knowledge of the bible and the Christian faith but also to preserve the ethnicity of Simalungun. The encounter of transferring from Simalungun to other languages can both help to shape your uniqueness and improve Simalungun learning for heritage speakers because a positive relationship between a well developed sense of ethnic identity and competence has been established.

## Acknowledgment

We would like to thank the participants for their voluntary participation in the research. The priests of Gereja Kristen Protestan Simalungun (GKPS) placed throughout Indonesia and the Research center of Universitas Prima Indonesia and STT Abdi Sabda Medan are gratefully acknowledged. We would also like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their comments.

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